British Waterways

WATERSIDE PUB PARTNERSHIP

SAFETY GUIDANCE FOR THE DESIGN OF WATERSIDE PUBS & RESTAURANTS

Information for third parties

This document was prepared to provide general guidance for use by British Waterways'. External third parties wishing to use the guidance must not seek to rely upon its content and should ensure they obtain their own independent advice where appropriate. Users of the guidance must also remember risk management is always dependant upon site specific issues and, consequently, the general principles set out in this guidance must be adapted to address the particular facts of each case/location.

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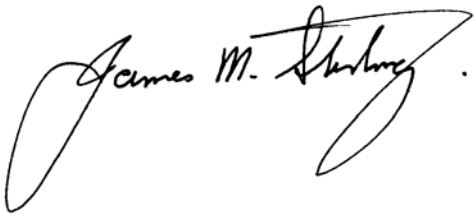

Technical Director **Date:** 01.05.07

Prepared by: Peter Wade, Visitor Safety Advisor

Custodian: Anthony Stammers, Head of Health & Safety

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1. Aims of the guidance

The following guidance has been prepared to assist the management of safety adjacent to waterside pubs & restaurants. It aims to provide practical guidance for what would be deemed a reasonable level of risk, taking account of the use of sites alongside waterways.

The guidance is designed to provide information to minimise risk to patrons of pubs and others who may be affected by either the design, and/or operation of the site and the adjacent waterside.

It is not exhaustive or prescriptive and should be used in conjunction with other relevant public safety guidance documents[1]. When developing new waterside pubs and/or restaurants, account must be taken of local conditions and on site circumstances that could affect the level of safety. For example, high use urban watersides with adjacent bars/restaurants may require segregation from the waterfront by physical barriers, although barrier landscaping may be more appropriate at a low intensity canal side pub.

2. Relationships with waterway staff & avoiding user conflict

When considering the development of new pubs adjacent to the waterway, thought must be given to the impact this may have on the safety of users and visitors.

Experience shows where contrasting activities take place there is a risk of user conflict. This risk can be reduced by considering the existing and proposed uses, and designing out possible areas of conflict.

Early contact with the local business unit will allow discussion on existing and proposed activities, any problem areas, and to discuss management of the waterfront after completion.

3. Principles for risk management

The principles to be adopted are taken from British Waterways Visitor Safety procedures, based on the Visitor Safety in the Countryside Group's Guiding Principles (VSCG).

3.1 Access & Egress

- Traffic access from the highway should meet local licensing conditions and the requirement of the road traffic & highways acts. Further guidance on these requirements is available from the local authority highways department.
- Where possible, vehicles & pedestrians should be segregated whilst on site

3.2 Car Parks

Car parking areas and waterside vehicular access:

- Should be level (where practicable) and adequately illuminated.
- Should be segregated from towpaths & waterway access points.
- Should (where practicable) have substantial fencing, vertical posts or kerbs to halt vehicles entering the towpath and/or water
- In addition, segregation may be required for cars, coaches & delivery vehicles where there is a danger of traffic conflict

3.3 Outside drinking/eating areas

- Ground should be level, and adequately illuminated.
- External seating should be segregated from waterfront. This may be achieved by fences, railings or other similar physical barriers.

[1] For example British Waterways internal safety guidance documents: Waterside Risk Control, Provision of Anti-slip Surface Treatments, RoSPA Publication Safety at Inland Water Sites.

- Sufficient distance should be allowed between external seating (or the pub boundary) and the waterfront to prevent congestion and/or incidents caused by patrons spilling onto towpath

3.4 Outdoor Play areas

- Should be segregated from waterfront by a physical barrier
- Where practicable provided with seating for parents, where not:
- In full view from other seating areas

3.5 Moorings

- When considering the installation of moorings adjacent to pub/restaurant frontages, thought must be given to the overall design of the location to minimise the risk of conflict. For example, moorings should not be developed adjacent to pubs on narrow towpaths where crowd pressure may cause conflict between different users.
- Moorings should be constructed in level areas, bollards / rings to be positioned close to frontage (no obstructions over towpath) and painted to be visible to users & visitors.
- Managed to minimise conflict and maximise use/turn around of craft

3.6 Towpath & canal-side frontages

Should be:

- suitable for use by visitors of varying abilities
- free draining after rainfall
- free from obvious & hidden hazards; and
- clearly defined, for example: potholes & uneven surfaces, low fences that could cause a tripping hazard, sudden drops onto the towpath, accumulation of vegetation on the water that may appear as grass to a child, or visitors in vehicles.

3.7 Waterside Rescue equipment

The need to provide rescue equipment or a means of self-recovery for anyone falling into the water will be depend on the outcome of a visitor safety risk assessment.

Where such equipment is provided, it should be subject to a strict inspection & maintenance regime to minimise the risk of non-availability.

In areas where there is a high likelihood of vandalism, throw-lines &/or life-rings can be supplied to pub/restaurants with training provided for their use.

In areas of high freeboard, grab chains, profiled fenders and or ladders may be required. The British Waterways Visitor Safety Guidance document Waterside Risk Control provides more guidance on this requirement. (Available from the Visitor Safety Area of BW Gateway)

3.8 Monitoring Behaviour

Behaviour of customers and others visiting pub / restaurant businesses will be critical to safety. Managers and supervising staff should ideally be able to monitor external seating areas from the internal trading area.

In order to achieve adequate external supervision the following should be considered:

- Lines of sight from servery to external areas
- CCTV coverage of external areas
- Positioning of waitress stations to maximise supervision.

3.9 Post Project Review.

It is imperative that each development is reviewed post completion to ensue that it has achieved good health and safety design practices. Should any deficiencies be identified, adequate remedial action should be taken to mitigate the problem.

It is also important that any learning points from the post project review are communicated to the author of this document to allow its inclusion when the document is next revised.